

Building a Godly Atmosphere For Childrearing

What kind of atmosphere do you have in your home? _____

What kind of atmosphere promotes learning and growth in the home?

What did Christ teach us in Matthew 18:1-14? If we were to study through this portion we would discover a number of things. We are to love our children, accept them, not neglect them, not offend them, and to bring them to Christ. Our goal should be to mold them into godly children for His glory and honor for He seeks *godly seed*. (See Malachi 2:11-16). Also read Mark 10:42-45.

Christ is the example for parents. We are to be known by the badge of love. Love ought to permeate the home. Love, respect, and honor toward one another ought to be the badge of our home. This coupled with godly direction, biblical discipline and obedience to the Word of God will set the stage for a godly atmosphere.

It is interesting that the New Testament says so little in the context of child rearing. What we do read is found in Ephesians 6:1-4, Colossians 3:21 and I Timothy 3:4-5. Reading these portions along with Old Testament portions and we will have the basic principles for a godly home. The New Testament assumes that we will “*fill in life*” with Biblical principles of discipleship and loving relationships. These things not only apply to the home, they all should start at home.

I. YOU MUST UNDERSTAND THE TEMPORARY/ PERMANENT RELATIONSHIPS:

A. The husband and wife relationship is permanent. So which relationship should receive the most work, attention and concern?
God says...*“Therefore shall a man leave his mother and father and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be one flesh.”*

B. The parent/child relationship is temporary. Psalm 127:4 teaches us that children are *“as arrows in the hand of the mighty man, so are children of the youth.”* What does this teach us?

1. Children are like an arrow that comes unfashioned (we must fashion the arrow) and are to be sent into the world to hit the target of the will of God.
2. Parents are accountable, the child is in the home only for a certain number of years and are to be sent out from the bow (parents) into the world to serve the Lord.
3. The following references will challenge the heart of any parent about their responsibility toward the child. But that is a temporary responsibility though a major one. (Prov. 2:1-8; Prov. 3:1-2; 4:1-3; 4:10-13; 6:20-23; Titus 2:1-8)

II. WE MUST DISCIPLE OUR OWN CHILDREN:

A. If we do this, we will look at parenting in a totally different light.

1. We will understand that we are to mold their lives unto fruitfulness, godliness, and surrender unto service to the Lord.

2. As parents we will be very burdened about the child surrender to us and thus unto God. We will recognize the seriousness of the sin nature and the normal rebellious spirit that dwells in the heart of every child, indeed our heart as well. (Jere. 17:9; Rom. 7:18)

B. To bring a child up in the discipline and admonition of the Lord
(Eph. 6:4) demands a discipling method used in the home.

1. To “*bring them up*” is a very specific thing... to mold their lives unto humility, brokenness, and surrender is a very serious thing.
2. The commission is for us to go and disciple all nations. (Matt. 28:18-20)
Where should we begin? At home, for there is our first and greatest responsibility. What does discipling look like in the home? It is big people teaching little children how to live and please God.

III. WE MUST DEMONSTRATE LOVE AND RESPECT IN THE HOME:

Unconditional love must be lived out in the home. This is the kind of love God has toward us. It is a love this given out of grace and has nothing to do with the response of the recipient. It has nothing to do with merit, what is deserved, or how the recipient performs. This love rests in the heart of the giver and is given with no strings attached. This kind of love MUST be live out between parents or it will not be given to the children either.

Every home is an atmosphere. It is an environment made by big people (parents) and has a great impact on the children. Dad, as the leader, has as great a responsibility as the mother to produce an atmosphere of unconditional love. Parents, are you a thermometer or a thermostat? Do you help produce the right kind of environment, or do you just respond to the environment that is there?

A. Mom and Dad you set the pace for the atmosphere of the home. Are you a thermometer or a thermostat? (John 13:34-35; John 15:9; thirteen times in Scripture God commands us to “*love one another.*”)

B. Our past family background is no excuse. Background may set habits and behavior, but all that can be change by God’s grace. Do we please God now?

C. Love must be shown, yes, lived even in tough times. That is when our family needs love the most.

1. Love is an action, not just some emotional response or feeling. Love (divine love) is a giving, giving, and giving again love.
2. It is a love of the will and is given out of choice. Divine love is a living out of the truth of I Corinthians 13:1-8. Our society is wrong about love, it basically lives out lust, and not real serving love.

IV. WE CAN MAKE HOME AN ENJOYABLE PLACE TO BE!

Prov. 15:15 “*All the days of the afflicted are evil; but a merry heart hath a continual feast.*”
Prov. 17:22 “*A merry heart doeth good like a medicine.*”

Jesus said, “*These things have I spoken unto you that your joy might be full.*”
(Jh 15:11)

In I Peter 1:8 we read, “*... rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.*”

- A. Our children need to know** -- no matter how tough it gets, there is still joy in serving the Lord. There is joy in the Lord... *“Rejoice and again I say, rejoice”* (Phil. 4:4).
- B. You don’t have to worry about spoiling kids by laughing, and having fun with them.**
- C. Do we convey that parenting is a real drag?**
Col. 3:21 *“Fathers, do not exasperate your children that they may lost heart.”*
- D. Possible our problem is we don’t have an understanding** of the doctrine of progressive sanctification. We tend to get too tough with our children, take things too serious and do not enjoy life with them. We can maintain biblical discipline as taught in Proverbs and still enjoy our children. We can enjoy the growing up stages, and maintain our own faith and expectation of the work of the Holy Spirit toward their progressive sanctification.

V. THERE ARE THINGS WE CAN DO TO IMPROVE THE ATMOSPHERE OF THE HOME:

A. LISTEN, Listen, listen.

James 1:19 tell us *“let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.”*
In Proverbs 18:13 we read, *“He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is a folly and a shame to him.”*

1. Here your child out. To often we listen to hear what we don’t like, then interrupt, or begin to think about our response and stop listening.
2. Help them develop the habit of communicating with you. Be fair; questions can be manipulative.
3. Be available; there are times when children (youth) want to talk, after school, etc., so be available and be compassionate. Listen to third party problems, give Bible answers, share how God is working.

B. Tell the whole truth.

Eph. 4:15 *“Speaking the truth in love.”* Thus they will be able to grow up in all aspects of the faith.

The Lord tells us in II Corinthians 10:12 *“... but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.”*

1. Don’t compare your children with what you may have accomplished. Our memories are selective. We will give impressions that we were better than we were. We may be embarrassed to admit that we failed.
2. Our youth need to see a model of growth. They need to see that by walking in truth, by applying the truth of God’s Word growth will take place in their lives. But, they must see this in our lives.

C. Plan time together, work on plans and then do them. (Deut 6:6-7)

“If you fail to plan, you plan to fail.” We all have the same amount of time. We must take time with our youth. Give quantity time as well as what we call quality time. Work up plans for togetherness. The best answer to peer pressure is parent time. If we don’t take time for children how do we expect to an influence?